

631 districts in the area adjoining Ruanda and Ussuwi. They still pay a set amount of tribute in natural produce to the king, but otherwise they may do, or not do, whatever they please unless they disturb the peace or necessitate the military intervention of our Resident.

As a rule the king or the princely governor will not make alternations in the conditions of feudal tenure if the vassal regularly sends his tribute, keeps his subjects in timorous dependence, promptly contributes the necessary groups of men in case of war, and remains subservient and loyal to the king.

[624] Finally, in the different villages and hamlets there are communal officials (bisonga) who are responsible to the batwale; they collect the taxes, arrange for corvée labor, and are in charge of petty jurisdiction, etc.

645 When discussing important matters, the king, also the
634 provincial governors, and the batwale, are assisted by a state council or a communal council, respectively. These councils are appointed by the king or by the governor, as the case may be, and are chosen from among the most respected and most prosperous men of the country or of the region. Represented among them particularly are the clan elders (abagabo). The council is convened on important occasions, and the king or the mutwale presides, but in his decisions the king or the mutwale is not bound by the advice of the council (No. 19, p. 267). The

634 batwale are responsible to the king for everything that happens
641 in their administrative district. They also have almost absolute power over the Bahutu and Batwa population which they administer. This includes the power of execution. It is true that subjects suppressed by an unjust mutwale may appeal to the provincial governor or to the king, but they obtain satisfaction only very seldom, for "the tsar is far away and the sky is high." [91]

643 The absolute ruler, the semidivine king is, of course, always
641 right and has every privilege; he owns all the land and all the cattle, and he vests with it whomever he chooses, whenever he chooses, and in amounts that he alone decides, and he may take any subject's life or property as he pleases.

643 These are the conditions, de jure and de facto, whenever
631 the king is a man of strong will, and there has been a whole

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ibgami, "at the king's."
 In speaking of the ancient royal residences, they use the noun umurwa, plural imirwa, or else ikigabiro, plural ibigabiro. As for the term umuhango (plural imihango), it signifies "mores, customs, traditions," hence the name Abanyamihango given to the "keepers of the customs."

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We remind the reader that the native government is an absolute and hereditary monarchy.

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The sovereign is master of the land and all it contains; he deals with the life and goods of his subjects as he pleases. Until recently his power knew no bounds of any sort and was wholly dependent upon his whims or good will. Imana (God) was no more powerful than he.

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Any attempt to draw a comparison between the two was formerly regarded as a crime of high treason. God and the King could, at best, be one and the same person.

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The subjects, therefore, tended to be regarded as things from which to draw as much pleasure and well-being as possible.

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Their own worth and usefulness were assessed and measured only with reference to the king. Let us add that the welfare of the kingdom, although it was not disregarded, could only come second in the thoughts of the king. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, the dignitaries of the realm to whom the king assigned the government of the provinces were compelled to spend most of their time at court. The Hamitic princes were very eager to keep the nobility close to them. They were always on the alert and daily surveyed the lords and courtiers who surrounded them (2). The latter belong /349/ almost

2. From Saint Simon we learn that the situation was the same under Louis XIV. "It is a demerit

643 There must have been few kings who benevolently left this life of their own accord.

Popular belief has accepted too many fables on the subject. It was still said recently that Queen Mother Nyiramavugo, a grandmother of King Lwabugiri who must have died around 1860, was the first to refuse the poison when old age drew near in spite of the dictates of custom and tradition. "Since that day," say the common people, "the Abiru, or keepers of the customs, who are in charge of this task and duty have not dared mention it anymore to kings and queens."

2. The Corpse of the Royal Dead is "Smoked"

766 "When a king died," the same people go on, "two Batutsi from important families were seized and killed forthwith near the body."

643 This was called "to make the king's pillow" (gusegurir' umwami). Those men were given to him to accompany and serve him in the spirit world.

● [641] A subject counts for nothing while the king is all important. It is proper, therefore, to send him at least two men chosen from the highest social stratum.

"They did not dare observe this rite," add the narrators, "at the death of the last king, Lwabugiri (in 1895)." /517/

When a queen mother died, two great ladies of the same (Mututsi) /Batutsi/ race were sacrificed. It is the Banyamugogo, or [767] "men with the big (mourning) log," who are in charge of funeral ceremonies. They make up the royal corporation of undertakers, although their name does not indicate this outright. They are called "men with the big (mourning) log," owing to the custom which demands that a wooden log be burned for three or four days after the death of an individual. For this purpose, one deliberately chooses [824] a green log of red-bloom erythrina (umuko), a symbolic tree that recalls the death of Ryangombe, the alleged founder of the famous secret society of initiates (imandwa).

[823] The body of the dead king is transported from his last home, which will henceforth be called Gisozi ("Big hill") (1), to one of the

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(d) *Intergroup political relations*

121 Intergroup political relations are essentially different. They do not imply inferiority and superiority. The opposite assumption is made: the two groups are supposed to be independent and equal. If by diplomacy or by war one succeeds in subduing the other, the subsequent unequal relations will be more similar to intragroup than to intergroup political relations.

If our definition of intragroup political organization be accepted, the word 'political' when applied to intergroup relations conveys a different and derivative meaning. Those who control legitimate coercion within a social structure are also those who are qualified to enter into intergroup relations. Subjects do not represent their own group, only rulers do. The ability to deal with intergroup relations results from a superior situation in internal political relations. In that sense, the political external relations may be said to be secondary. In the following account of Ruanda political organization the emphasis will be on the primary political relations, the internal ones.

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642 In Ruanda, there were two types of relationships sanctioned
571 by legitimate coercion on the part of the superior. Consequently we may distinguish within the political organization two structures which may be termed administrative and military. Another system of social relations was the clientage structure or the feudal organization. It occupied an intermediate position between the political and the private spheres. It was not purely political, but it was much more than a private agreement such as a loan. Consequently the feudal relations in Ruanda will be considered in close connexion with the administrative and military ones.

183 The three structures were interwoven and interconnected at each level. This was particularly the case at the top and at the bottom. The mwami held the supreme position in the three systems and the commoners were taxpayers, members of an army, and clients. In the intermediate levels it happened, too, that a superior and an inferior were linked by several ties: one could be at the same time the lord and the cattle-chief of an individual, and the client of one's army chief.

I shall describe and analyse each structure separately.

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128 be negative or positive. It is to be distinguished from the aim explicitly stated in the charter (written or not) of the institution or the purpose of the association consciously conceived by its members.

Take, for instance, some of the religious ceremonies of a particular group. Their aim as known and admitted by every member of the group may be to honour the ancestral spirits, whereas their function, of which perhaps nobody in the group is completely aware, is to manifest and reinforce the *esprit de corps* of the group. Or an association whose explicit purpose is some philanthropic activity may have as its function the giving of certain political control to a particular set of people. Aim and function are not necessarily different. It may happen that the aim expresses one of the ways in which the institution is significant from the viewpoint of the perpetuation of the particular organization existing in that society.¹²

(a) *Fiscal function*

647 It is not difficult to determine the main social function of the administrative structure of Ruanda. It was identical indeed with its explicitly recognized aim in that society. Aim and function were fiscal: the country had to provide its rulers with consumption goods.

651 634 Tribute collecting was very methodically organized. Because of the division of the country into about seventy to ninety districts, the amount to be supplied was distributed in a way which did not favour one region more than another. Even parts of Ruanda which were far from the royal court had to provide dues for the local royal residence. The timing of the levies was also fortunate as the agricultural products were not demanded when the rulers needed them but at harvesting time. Tribute labour seems also to have been regularly required during the year.

641 Were these impositions heavy? It is very difficult to assess the proportion of foodstuff and labour required from each family head. I gathered from different informants that about a third of the labour of one individual was required from each family. It is important to stress the fact that only one person in each *rugo* had to fulfil this demand whereas there were usually several men able to give that tribute in each family.

¹² See Redcliffe-Brown, 1922, p. 12; 1940, p. 10; 1952, pp. 200 f; Maquet 1949a; 1954c, p. 65.

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It is still less easy to assess the relative importance of land and cattle taxes. Informants say that in the past they had to give a great deal, but such recollections of taxpayers do not mean very much. It is certain that if such a fiscal system has been maintained for numerous generations, exploitation has been kept within bearable limits. In Ruanda, as elsewhere, if the taxpayer is overburdened with dues and levies to such a point that he has not enough time and food left to go on producing, the source of impositions will dry up. Fifty years ago, after long practice, the Ruanda rulers had been able, it seems, by trial and error, to determine the exact amount of exploitation that the country could support. Yet if the group of taxpayers as such were not over-exploited, it is certain that some individuals in the group have been very heavily taxed merely because those who had the power to impose taxes wanted to avenge a particular offence.

The taxpaying group was not restricted to the Hutu stratum since some tributes were due on cattle holdings. Agricultural dues and tribute labour however, were entirely provided by Hutu and as they constituted about ninety per cent. of the population, the total amount of their contribution was considerably higher than that of other groups.

Those who received benefit from this system were, first of all, the king and his spouses. They did not have to come and live in a district residence to have the use of the produce collected in that district. Goods were sent to the court or wherever the king wanted them. Other beneficiaries were the chiefs in charge of the collection: land-, cattle-, and hill-chiefs. About two-thirds of the impositions on agricultural produce was deducted by them. Were they all Tutsi? No, answered the Tutsi interviewed. According to ninety-two per cent. of them a Hutu could be appointed land-chief. But he could not become a cattle-chief, according to ninety-one per cent. This is quite understandable, as the first had to deal with Hutu and the second with Tutsi. But were many Hutu in fact endowed with the profitable responsibilities of the land-chief or the hill-chief? 258 informants (eighty-six per cent.) were able to give the names of Hutu land-chiefs, but they mentioned only thirty-four different names. A Hutu land-chief, Ndarwubatsa, was mentioned 180 times, another, Kanyonyomba, 109 times, and another, Segore, ninety-seven times. As our informants were scattered throughout Ruanda it is very probable that the cases of

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the aggressors at bay. Army herdsmen also lived in the same region. Armies constituted during previous reigns were more likely to be localized in the interior of the country. 723

Expeditions against neighbouring countries were made. They were prepared by spies' reports. Military chiefs had at their disposal people named *abatasi*. They depended directly on the court and had taken an oath not to betray Ruanda. They were the only ones who could have connexions with foreign governments without committing an offence punishable by death. 708 [64]

There were two kinds of expedition: those planned by the king (*igitero*) and those planned by a military chief. The latter expeditions were short raids which could not last more than two days (*agateroshuma*). A very complicated ritual was observed in the choice of the leader of the expedition (*umugabe w'igitero*). This choice was made after divining operations by means of the viscera of steers and rams. During the battle, the general of the expedition would sit motionless in his headquarters; every move backwards of his would have resulted in his forces' flight. 721 [787] [726]

Some of the warriors (*abakoni*, stick-bearers) had the special charge of capturing cattle. If the expedition was successful, it ended with a celebration lasting several days. During the festivities, rewards and badges of honour were granted, warriors marched off in triumph, and their deeds were hymned and praised in poems. 727

(c) *The herdsmen's section*

The section of herdsmen, as its name suggests, tended the army's cattle. A certain number of herds were regarded as linked to a particular army. The army-chief was also responsible for these cattle and in that capacity he commanded several head herdsmen (*umutware w'inka*, *umutware w'inyambo*). 705

An army's cattle did not constitute an homogeneous group from the point of view of the rights enjoyed over them by different persons. Four categories of an army's cattle may be distinguished according to the person who had the right of effective disposal of the cattle. By effective disposal is meant here the rights allowing one person to give cattle to another, who then becomes his client. A first category of the army's cattle comprises those of which the mwami had an effective disposal; the other three categories were those in which the rights belonged respectively to the army-chief, 705 422

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indices and the lynching of Negroes in the Southern States of the Union. There is evidently no rational means for the whites of the south to impute the responsibility for the lack of rain—which was then the cause of the poor cotton crops—to Negroes. This typically irrational behaviour, however, becomes comprehensible if we accept the frustration-aggression sequence. In this sense, it can be said that the relation between the two phenomena, economic crises and lynching, is a logical relation.⁵ 114

Ruanda political relations disclose one of the premises of that culture. Underlying the political and feudal structures there was a general assumption about human relations. In order to formulate it as accurately as may be possible, I shall first consider more closely the social roles of the superior and inferior in the field of political and feudal relations. In the following section the words 'ruler' and 'subject' refer to superiors and inferiors in the administrative, military, and clientage structures. 121
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2. THE RULER'S AND SUBJECT'S SOCIAL ROLES

The analysis of the political organization of Ruanda indicates that the ruler was expected to assume a complex role towards his subject. The two poles of it were protection and profit. The subordinate was somebody whom one protected: he was also a resource from which it was normal to draw some advantage. 571
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Protection was not restricted to a certain field of action, but potentially encompassed the whole of the subject's life. When the inferior needed some help, any help, he was expected to apply to his ruler even if the issue was completely alien to the sphere of the main relations between the ruler and the subject. A client could ask his *shobuja* for aid in matters not pertaining to cattle and *buhaks* services. It was even thought proper for the ruler to interfere in difficulties which his subject through his own misdemeanour had run into as, for instance, when an inferior had been caught stealing from somebody. When protection was refused, it was not because the question was not the ruler's concern, but on other grounds, such as disloyalty.

The extent of that protection was not strictly defined. It did not constitute for the ruler a set of particular and fixed obligations. The subordinate had a general right to be protected but very few claims to particular advantages. In *buhaks*, when one offered one's

⁵ Dollard, 1939, p. 44 (quoted by Maquet, 1951, p. 166).

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641 services to a lord in order to become his client, one was entitled to receive usufruct of his cattle. But the number of cows was not determined. It could be one or twenty or fifty or even more.

It was up to the ruler to decide if any protection was to be granted and to what extent. Of course the pressure of public opinion obliged him not to refuse aid to his subordinate unless he had some socially accepted reason to do so (such as the subordinate's disobedience), but the measure of the protection depended on his own will and pleasure.

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114 These characteristics of the protective attitude (care of the whole of the subordinate's life, its very variable extent being left to the superior's judgement) allow us to apply to it the qualification of 'paternalistic'. Paternalism is understood here as 'the principle of acting in a way like that of a father towards his children. Because of the total dependency of the human offspring, during their first years, on those who nurse and educate them—and they are usually their parents—the latter's authority ranges over the whole of the life of the child. In everything he needs his parents, in everything they have to direct and control him. Moreover, parents sovereignly judge what they are going to give their children. Undoubtedly, their social groups force them to secure for their children the protection they need to live and develop but the children may not require such or such a particular service. Parents decide without further ado what is suitable for the child and think that better than he they know what is 'best for him'.

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641 A paternal relation does not exclude profit. In describing the Ruanda's father's role towards his sons, I mentioned that the father's interests were usually thought to be predominant in respect of the children's interests. When inferiors were not the superior's children but his subjects or clients, that aspect of profit was much more emphasized. All those who occupied the inferior position in the relations of the political and feudal structures had dues to give and tribute labour to perform for the profit of their superiors, and some of these obligations were heavy. It did not appear at all unusual to Ruanda that power brought many privileges to those who had it. If one is a chief, is it not fitting to draw advantages from one's situation? Here, again, the extent of the subject's obligations was left within very broad limits to the superior's discretion.

The ruler's role seems to have been that paternalistic blend of

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protection and profit. Of course, that role was not always perfectly fulfilled. Chiefs who have been more exploiters than protectors are remembered. It was by comparison with that ideal picture that their behaviour was judged and blamed.

The subject was expected to have a role complementary to the one we have just described. He was supposed to assume an attitude of dependency. Inferiority is the relative situation of a person who has to submit to another in a well delimited field. Dependence is inferiority in the whole of life. When the ruler gives an order, he has to be obeyed, not because his order falls within the field over which he has authority, but because he is a ruler.

It could be objected that in Ruanda this attitude of dependence was not in principle unlimited. We saw that cattle- and land-chiefs could not require as many dues as they liked, that subjects could resort to higher authorities against their immediate chiefs, and that it was possible to oppose one chief against another. This does not change the fact that the dependent attitude was the only one socially expected of the subject. Indeed it was impossible to be considered a 'good' subject if one asserted independence of one's superior. A claim of independence, even limited, obliged one to leave the superior, to ask for the support of another and to assume towards the latter an attitude of complete compliance. This appeared clearly in the feudal relation. A lord could not be refused what he asked (even at the present time a shop assistant who is obliged by the law to sell only for cash, will find it very difficult not to sell on credit to his lord). He could only be deserted for another.

3. FORMULATION OF THE INEQUALITY PREMISE

When paternalism and dependence define the permanent roles expected from two persons, much more is implied than when they express the transitory roles of a father and his young son. In the latter case it is known that the son will grow up and one day, even if he has to wait till after his father's death, will be equal to what his father was when the latter was young. But when paternalism and dependence are linked in permanent reciprocal roles, the assumption is that there is a fundamental inequality between the two persons. The subject will never grow up, he will never 'reach his majority'. It is implied without any doubt that there is between the ruler and his subject a difference so fundamental that it never can be suppressed. This fundamental inequality of men is the

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